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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 29 | Min 15 | Humidity 15% Clear sky Sensex 83,580 | Nifty 25,693 | Gold 1,54,927 | Silver 2,46,337 | Dollar 90.54 | Euro 106.96 | GBP 123.23

GOLDEN HOUR STRIKES

Cyber frauds worth ₹2,640 crore reported across state in 2025; police manage to block or recover ₹436 crore of this due to prompt reporting, action

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WINS & LOSSES

England relieved, Nepal proud after taking match to the wire; New Zealand thumps Afghanistan; Sri Lanka beat Ireland

PAGE 9

Workers' unions will continue with campaign for statutory minimum wages after SC disposes of petition seeking uniform welfare measures for domestic helps, putting ball in Centre and State Govt's courts

FOR THE BASIC MINIMUM

Chief Justice urged to withdraw broader remarks made on labour regulation

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FILE PHOTO

"The CJI must uphold constitutional rights. They cannot erase out a whole sector that invisibly works for them and for the economy

— Geeta Menon, Domestic Workers Rights Union

The Supreme Court recently declined to issue directions to the Centre and State governments to frame welfare measures or enforce minimum wages for domestic workers, holding that such matters fall within the domain of the legislature and the executive.

Reacting to this, workers' unions in Bengaluru said they would carry on their campaign for statutory minimum wages.

A Bench led by the Chief Justice observed that the Court cannot compel governments to make laws or introduce policy frameworks for a particular class of workers. "We cannot direct the legislature to enact a law," the Court said. During the hearing, the Chief Justice made broader remarks on labour regulation, stating that "too much of regulation and trade unionism has led to the destruction of industries in this country," indicating the Court's reluctance to step into economic and labour policy issues through judicial orders.

The petition had sought uniform welfare measures and minimum wages for domestic workers across the country, highlighting their vulnerability and lack of statutory protection. However, the Court noted that some States have already fixed minimum wages for domestic help, while others have not, and said it was not for the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

Rice & shine

Bengaluru sitting on treasure trove of 1,400 native varieties of rice

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Most Bengalureans may think rice comes in just a few familiar varieties from the supermarket shelf, but a quiet effort led out of the city has revealed a stunning truth. Karnataka is home to more than 1,400 native rice varieties, part of a larger collection of over 2,200 indigenous crop types gathered in just eight months under a state government programme.

Anchored in Bengaluru, the Agriculture Department's Indigenous Varieties Conservation and Promotion Programme is fast turning the city into the nerve centre of a statewide mission to revive vanishing traditional seeds.

The initiative, launched in April and May last year, has collected indigenous seeds from 586 farmers spread across different agro-climatic zones of the state. While the sourcing happened in villages, the backbone of the effort is based in Bengaluru.

A dedicated seed bank has been established at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bengaluru, where endangered traditional varieties of rice, ragi, jowar, pulses, millets, oilseeds, wheat and chilli are being preserved for future generations. Around 1,900 of the collected varieties have already been stored in the gene bank here.

"The idea is not just to store seeds

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 V-Day with a twist

At Loco Lane, love isn't just complicated, it's officially cancelled. No roses. No awkward candlelight dinners. Just high-energy games, unapologetic fun, and large groups celebrating friendship, freedom, and chaos—done the luxury way. **Where: Loco Lane, Ashok Nagar; When: February 14, 5 pm**

02 Heart on your sleeve

Faheem Abdullah, the Kashmiri singer-songwriter behind deeply resonant tracks like Saiyaara, Ishq, Ehsaas, and Sajde, whose music has quietly become the soundtrack to longing, love, and introspection for a new generation, is set to perform in a Valentine's Day concert in Bengaluru. **Where: Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru; When: Feb 14, 7.30 pm**

03 Stage spectacle

The 12th Attakkalari India Biennial, in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut / Max Mueller Bhavan Bangalore presents LONO - The Woman With Two Navels by acclaimed German choreographer Sara Angius. **Where: Bangalore International Centre (BIC), Domlur; When: February 12, 7.30 pm**

04 It's a humorous life

Acclaimed writer and translator Maithreyi Karnoor will be in conversation with Aravind Jayan, for the launch of 'Gooday Nagar', a dazzling collection that reimagines everyday Indian life through humour, strangeness, and quiet philosophical wit. **Where: Beku, JP Nagar; When: Feb 15, 12 pm**

05 Vibe set

The Sixth Sense, India's first and largest multidisciplinary immersive festival, conceptualised and developed by Swordfish, the creators of Echoes of Earth festival, brings together art, music, technology, and nature to rekindle connection with the natural world. **Where: Alembic City, Whitefield; When: Feb 5 to 22**

GBA moves to free trees from concrete clutch

Following identification of trees that pose danger, forest cell of civic authority urges removal of concrete, stone and cement blocks from tree footing, marking crucial move to protect city's avenue trees

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The Forest, Environment, and Climate Change (FECC) cell of the Greater Bengaluru Authority has written to the chief engineers of all five city corporation limits, requesting immediate action to decongest avenue trees in the city by removing concrete or tiles from around their bases.

This follows a three-month-long enumeration and evaluation exercise undertaken by FECC last year to identify problematic avenue trees in the city that pose a danger to life and property. The survey of only major roads in the city had identified as many as 128 trees with their bases concretised up to the trunk, with no space for water and air.

"We have written to all ten chief engineers across the five city corporation limits to take up this work based on various government orders and the NGT ruling. Execution will require them to draw a detailed plan, which can be for the upcoming financial year. Funds for this work can be secured in the upcoming budget in coordination with respective ACFs," said Sudarshan GK, Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF), Greater Bengaluru Authority. The issue of concretised tree bases in the city has been highlighted by tree activists and environmentalists on multiple occasions in the past. Following these demands, on June 10 last year, the Department of Forest, Ecology and Environment of Karnataka issued a government order (GO) stating that tree bases across the state be deconcretised to promote their health and survival. The GO was issued on directions from Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre.

Following the GO, FECC issued an office order requesting the Road Infrastructure Department of GBA, erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), to take necessary action and remove the concrete, stone, and cement blocks from tree bases immediately to leave a radius of one meter as per directions given by the National Green Tribunal.

However, the work to deconcretise avenue trees in Bengaluru is far from getting started on the ground. "Although we have written to the engineers requesting them to take immediate steps to prevent any untoward incidents and to protect the green cover, we have yet to receive responses," added the DCF.

There are multiple directions and orders given by various courts on keeping the area around tree trunks concrete-free. The most recent was the 2013 order by the National Green Tribunal. As per the order, there should be at least a one-metre radius of concrete-free space around avenue trees.

As per the directions, the area should be levelled with soil, and grass may be planted wherever it is possible. It is also suggested to discourage concretisation or tiling of the central verge of the roads or pathways.

File photo of concretised tree base

All ten chief engineers across five city corporation limits have been instructed to take up work as per NGT ruling; funds for this work can be secured in upcoming budget in coordination with respective ACFs, says GBA Deputy Conservator of Forests

Cycling showdown draws enthusiasts from all over city

Theme of event focused on transformative power of cycling and its positive impact on individual well-being

The first-ever edition of HCL Cyclothon Bengaluru held on Sunday witnessed participation from over 1,850 cyclists. The race began and concluded at NICE tollgate in Hosakerahalli, providing a competitive and rewarding challenge for cyclists of all levels.

Held under the aegis of the Cycling Federation of India (CFI), the much-anticipated event brought together seasoned professionals and enthusiastic amateurs, who competed across multiple race categories for a total prize pool of Rs 23 lakh. The theme '#ChangeYourGear' focused on the transformative power of cycling and its positive impact on individual well-being.

Commenting on the event, Sundar Mahalingam, President – Strategy, HCL Group, said it was encouraging to see the strong response and the passion cyclists brought to the event. "Since its inception, the initiative has grown into a nationwide movement with more than 16,000 participants across cities. The energy and engagement witnessed here reinforce our belief that cycling is fast becoming a lifestyle choice rooted in fitness, sustainability, and community. Through this platform, we aim to continue creating meaningful sporting opportunities that promote active living and inclusivity," said Mahalingam.

In the 48-km Professional Road Race, the competition was intense, with Harshveer Singh, Sahil Kumar and Naveen John securing the top three positions in the men's category and Swasti Singh, Soumya Antapur and Harshita Jakhar finishing as winner, runner-up, and second runner-up, respectively, in the women's category. In the 50-km Amateur Road Race, Basappa Teradal, Harsh Pawar, and Muhammed Tahaa Sharaf claimed the top three positions in the men's category, while Arpita Ketan Pandya, Naga Siri HN and Vishu Dhama secured the winner, runner-up and second runner-up spots in the women's category. **— BMB**

Life certificate may be made mandatory for Gruha Lakshmi scheme

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has directed the Chief Secretary to immediately examine and take necessary action on making life certificates mandatory for beneficiaries of the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, one of the state's five guarantee programmes. The direction follows a representation by State Guarantee Authority Vice-Chairman and MLC Dinesh Gooligowda. Since its launch in June 2023, the scheme has provided financial assistance of about Rs 57,300 crore to 1,24,12,543 eligible beneficiaries. However, concerns have been raised over misuse of funds being credited to accounts of deceased beneficiaries.

According to the representation, more than two lakh accounts of deceased beneficiaries across the state have continued to receive Gruha Lakshmi payments, prompting the need for corrective measures to prevent leakage. Drawing a parallel with pension rules for retired government employees, where annual submission of life certificates to banks is mandatory, Dinesh Gooligowda suggested that Gruha Lakshmi beneficiaries should also be required to submit a life certificate every year to the concerned bank to ensure transparency and proper utilisation of public funds. **— BMB**

Golden hour reporting has helped boost cyber fraud recoveries

Prompt reporting through helpline 1930 helps police recover crores despite sharp rise in cyber fraud cases statewide

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Prompt reporting and growing public awareness are helping police claw back increasing amounts of money lost to cyber fraud, even as overall fraud volumes continue to rise sharply.

In 2025 alone, cyber frauds worth ₹2,640 crore were reported across the state. This translates to an average loss of ₹7.23 crore every day or about ₹30 lakh every hour. Of this, police managed to block or recover ₹436 crore through swift action triggered by calls to the cyber crime helpline 1930. On an average, ₹1.19 crore was recovered daily, or nearly ₹5 lakh every hour.

Police attribute the rising recovery figures to the growing use of the 'Golden Hour' mechanism, where victims report fraud within one hour of the transaction. Early alerts enable authorities to freeze fraudulent accounts before funds are siphoned off.

Recovery improves despite surge

Data over the last four years shows that while cyber fraud has increased multi-fold, recovery rates have also improved. A senior police official said, "In 2022, cyber frauds amounted to ₹113 crore, with only ₹8 crore recovered, a recovery rate of 7.08 percent. In 2023, fraud losses jumped to ₹562 crore, while recoveries rose to ₹66 crore, improving the recovery rate to 11.7 percent. The trend dipped slightly in 2024, when ₹2,396 crore was lost and ₹226 crore recovered, a recovery rate of 9.43 percent. However, 2025 marked a sharp improvement, with recoveries rising to 16.51 percent, the highest in four years."

Helpline calls surge

The volume of calls to the cyber crime helpline 1930 reflects growing public awareness. In 2022, the helpline received 1,30,333 calls, averaging around 357 calls per day or 15 calls per hour.

By 2025, annual calls surged to 24,08,475. This works out to nearly 6,600 calls a day or about 275 calls every hour, an increase of more than 18 times in just three years.

Officials say this surge has directly contributed to higher recovery amounts, as more victims are reporting incidents without hesitation and within the critical time window

Officials say this surge has directly contributed to higher recovery amounts, as more victims are reporting incidents without hesitation and within the critical time window.

Faster reporting matters

Senior police officials emphasise that timely reporting remains the key factor. Victims who alert authorities within an hour significantly improve the chances of blocking transactions and recovering funds. The Home Department has also strengthened infrastructure by introducing IVR-based call classification and a Kannada-language chatbot to guide victims through the complaint process.

Despite the encouraging recovery numbers, officials caution that the scale of cyber fraud remains a serious concern. With losses averaging over ₹7 crore a day, police stress that prevention, awareness and immediate reporting are crucial to slowing the growth of cyber crime in the state.

Gangrape of minor: Death sentence to accused upheld

In a strong endorsement of capital punishment in a particularly gruesome case, the Karnataka High Court recently upheld the death sentences handed down to three men convicted of gang-raping and killing a young girl in 2021.

A division bench of Justices HP Sandesh and Venkatesh Naik T dismissed appeals filed by the three convicts against both their conviction and the death penalty imposed by the trial court in Mangaluru.

The bench said that the offence, in which the victim — just seven years and seven months old — was sexually assaulted and murdered in Vamanjoor (near Mangaluru), represented a crime "against society at large."

The court observed that if a lighter punishment were imposed, it might send the "wrong message to society and the public at large" and risk emboldening similar acts, which it said must be "curbed with iron hands."

"Hence, we are of the view that the trial court has not committed any error in imposing the death sentence, and it requires confirmation as sought by the trial judge," the court narrated in its order.

According to the prosecution's case accepted by both the sessions court and the high court, the three men — Jayban Adivasi (27), Mukesh Singh (25), both from Madhya Pradesh, and Manish Thirki (44) from Jharkhand — worked at a tiles factory near Vamanjoor where the victim's parents were also employed.

On November 21, 2021, they are said to have lured the girl into a brick kiln on the pretext of giving her snacks and money.

The conviction found that the first accused assaulted her sexually and inflicted mortal injuries while attempting to silence her cries; later, the body was discarded in a drain. Another suspect linked to the case reportedly absconded and was not part of the sentencing.

The high court's decision represents one of the rare confirmations of death penalty in cases involving the rape and murder of a minor, reflecting the judiciary's stance on imposing the most serious punishment in what it views as the "rarest of rare" cases. **BMB**

Thailand link exposed in hydro ganja smuggling

Hydro ganja parcels traced to Thailand-linked foreign post office routes

The City Crime Branch has rolled out a new strategy to crack down on drug peddlers smuggling high-grade hydro ganja into Bengaluru through illegal routes by closely tracking frequent travellers to Thailand.

Acting on inputs from recent arrests, the CCB has found that drug syndicates are using Thailand as a key transit hub, exploiting the legal cultivation of cannabis there and sneaking contraband into India through unsuspecting or paid couriers.

Investigations revealed that several accused had travelled to Thailand solely to procure hydro ganja, which was then brought back to the city by evading airport checks. Police sources said Thailand-based drug links supplying the Silicon City have now been firmly established.

Following this, the CCB's Anti-Narcotics Wing has intensified surveillance on suspected travellers, particularly those making repeated trips to Bangkok under the guise of tourism.

Details such as travel frequency, duration of stay and items carried on return are being analysed using passenger data from Kempegowda International Airport, which handles nearly 25,000 to 30,000 Thailand-bound travellers every month. Officials said syndicates lure carriers with free air tickets, sponsored trips and bonuses of up to Rs 2 lakh for smuggling hydro ganja.

During interrogation of accused arrested in recent cases registered by Amruthahalli and Mahalakshmi Layout police, investigators uncovered organised networks coordinating procurement, transport and local distribution.

Hydro ganja consignments have also been traced to parcels arriving from Thailand at the Chamarajpet foreign post office, prompting closer scrutiny of courier channels. Police officials said monitoring foreign travel-linked networks has become unavoidable. **BMB**

Family of B'lurean found dead in Kochi to pursue legal fight

A Bengaluruean, whose decomposed body was found in a forested area in Kochi after he was deported from Kuwait, was laid to rest on Sunday, police said. Suraj Lama (59) arrived in Kochi on October 5 after being deported from Kuwait, where he had run a restaurant.

He was reportedly deported following memory loss caused by methanol poisoning.

Lama went missing from the Ernakulam Government Medical College, Kalamassery, on October 10. His decomposed body was later discovered on November 30 in a forested area near the Hindustan Machine Tools premises.

Police said DNA test results recently confirmed that the body was that of Lama.

Officials said the body was released to the family earlier in the day and was cremated thereafter. Rimi Lama, Suraj's wife, told reporters that the incident should be treated as a murder case.

"It has to be seen as a murder case. If the hospital had taken care of him, my husband would be alive today," she claimed, adding that she would file a complaint against the hospital.

"Neither the hospital nor the police at the airport helped my husband," she alleged. **PTI**

Encroachment clearance stalls, public pathway remains blocked

Jurisdiction fight between revenue officials and civic body delays full revival of Chinnappanahalli public pathway despite repeated citizen complaints for years

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Residents and activists of Chinnappanahalli in the Mahadevapura Assembly constituency were hopeful when revenue authorities, accompanied by personnel from the HAL Police Station, began clearing encroachments on a long-neglected public pathway on November 18, 2025. The drive was seen as a crucial step toward restoring an essential access route used historically by pedestrians and bullock carts. However, the optimism was short-lived as officials cleared encroachments only halfway and failed to complete the task, leaving large portions of the pathway still blocked.

Residents said authorities had assured them that the entire stretch would be reclaimed for public use. Instead, the operation was abruptly halted, with officials later claiming that the remaining encroachments fell under the jurisdiction of the Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC). This explanation has triggered confusion and anger among locals, especially after the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Chief Commissioner publicly urged citizens to reclaim public spaces and announced plans to revitalise 194 unused public areas across the city.

Questioning the lack of coordination, a resident asked why authorities initiated the clearance with police protection if jurisdictional issues existed. "If revenue officials claim their job is done, will BECC now step in and complete the work?" the resident asked.

Strong criticism has come from MR Venkatesh, State Organising Convenor of the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti, who said the pathway historically connected villages, ponds, and burial grounds. He alleged that repeated complaints to revenue authorities were ignored. "Many people have illegally encroached upon land meant strictly for public use. Since officials have failed to act decisively, I will move the court against the revenue authorities," he said.

Left: Board put up by revenue authorities claiming the land as the public pathway; Right: Revenue authorities and HAL Police clearing encroachment of the public pathway

> **"This pathway was traditionally used by pedestrians and bullock carts to reach ponds, villages and burial grounds**
> – Venkatesh, State Organising Convenor, Dalit Sangharsh Samiti

The issue has also reached the Karnataka Legislative Council, where MLC SL Bhojegowda demanded immediate clearance of the encroachments. Residents said officials later claimed that respondents had obtained a stay order from a court and permission from a competent authority to legalise the encroachments. This claim has raised further questions. "If permissions existed, why did authorities attempt eviction in the first place?" a resident asked.

Responding to the criticism, the Deputy Tahsildar, Bengaluru East, stated that encroachments on revenue land had been cleared and that remaining portions came under BECC's jurisdiction. He added that a report had been submitted to higher authorities. With legal hurdles, jurisdictional disputes, and administrative delays, residents and activists are now left waiting, uncertain whether the public pathway will ever be fully restored.

Auto land conversion brings khata relief

In a governance reform, the State government has removed the requirement for separate land conversion in areas covered under the Published Master Plan within the GBA. Landowners and developers can now directly seek plan approvals as per the Master Plan, with land conversion occurring automatically as part of the approval process. The reform also allows conversion of B Khata properties to A Khata for existing individual owners, offering long-awaited relief to lakhs of site owners whose properties fall within Master Plan limits.

The move is intended to improve ease of governance and compliance by eliminating delays, discretion and corruption that earlier plagued the conversion process. Previously, approvals often took four to six months despite provisions for deemed conversion. With auto-conversion, the Revenue Department aims to cut costs and timelines, promote transparency and encourage planned urban development. For B Khata property holders, A Khata status strengthens legal ownership, improves access to bank loans, enhances property value and simplifies transactions. By linking auto-conversion with e-Khatha and digitised land records, the government aims to reduce disputes and create a foundation for urban growth. **— BMB**

Metro fare hike deferred after political row

The Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) on Sunday evening announced that the proposed annual metro fare revision, scheduled to take effect from February 9, 2026, has been kept on hold until further orders.

In a statement, BMRCL said the decision on revised fares would be taken after a review by its Board and communicated later. The announcement came hours after a senior official had indicated that the fare revision would proceed as planned, citing the absence of any stay order and saying the corporation had no option but to implement the hike. The issue triggered sharp political exchanges through the day. BJP MP Tejasvi Surya accused the Karnataka government of pushing for higher metro fares, alleging that state officials had urged the Fare Fixation Committee to increase fares due to the state's weak financial position and sought an automatic annual revision mechanism. The controversy unfolded amid a blame game between the state and the Centre. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had earlier written to the Centre urging it to stop the fare hike. BJP leaders disputed this claim during public exchanges. **— BMB**

Bengaluru South MP Tejasvi Surya interacted with commuters regarding the Bengaluru Metro fare revision at RV Road Metro Station on Sunday

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Power wastage
Victoria Layout

A streetlight on Palmgrove Road in Victoria Layout continues to remain switched on during daytime hours despite repeated complaints, resulting in unnecessary electricity wastage.

Banner menace
Vignan Nagar

A birthday hoarding near a petrol bunk in Vignan Nagar has occupied the footpath for over a week, spilling onto the road, disrupting traffic and causing inconvenience to pedestrians and buses.

Abandoned vehicles
Old Race Course Road

Two abandoned, rusting cars have been lying unattended on Old Race Course Road near the Police Quarters, creating an eyesore and obstructing movement in the area.

HC voids land transfer after daughters neglect father's care

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In a judgment reinforcing the protective intent of laws meant for senior citizens, the Karnataka High Court has set aside a gift deed under which an 84-year-old man had transferred 2.4 acres of his self-acquired agricultural land to his two daughters. The court found that the transfer was made on the assurance that the daughters would take care of him in his old age, an assurance that was subsequently breached.

The case was brought before the High Court by Venkataiah, an octogenarian from Tumakuru district, who had executed a registered gift deed in favour of his daughters in 2023. According to him, the decision to part with his land was based on their promise to provide him food, shelter, medical care and emotional support. However, after the transfer was completed and the revenue records were changed in their favour, he alleged that the daughters failed to look after him and left him without basic care.

When Venkataiah approached the authorities seeking cancellation of the gift deed, his request was rejected on the ground that the document did not expressly contain a clause requiring the daughters to maintain him. Aggrieved by this reasoning, he moved the High Court under Section 23 of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, which permits annulment of property transfers made subject to maintenance, if

Finding that his daughters failed to care for complainant in his old age, court quashes gift deed

such maintenance is not provided.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj, who heard the matter, rejected the narrow interpretation adopted by the authorities. The court observed that elderly parents, particularly in rural and semi-urban settings, often transfer property to their children based on trust and moral assurances rather than formal contractual terms.

The court emphasised that such transfers are usually rooted in familial bonds and expectations of care, not in legal sophistication. It pointed out that insisting on an explicit maintenance clause in every gift deed would ignore how such transactions actually occur within families.

The judgment also took note of the fact that the gift deed had been drafted by the daughters and that the elderly father was not fully aware of its technical contents. In such circumstances, the court said, the absence of an express clause could not be used against him, especially when the overall circumstances showed that the transfer was conditional upon care and support.

During the proceedings, one of the daughters submitted a written no-objection to the cancellation of the gift deed. The court viewed this as supporting the father's claim that the promise of care had not been honoured. Another respondent, the petitioner's grandson, opposed the plea and sought to assert an interest in the land. The High Court rejected this claim, holding that no one could benefit from a property transfer under the Act without assuming the corresponding obligation to care for the senior citizen.

Concluding that the daughters had failed to fulfil the condition on which the property was gifted, the High Court set aside the gift deed and quashed the earlier administrative orders that had refused relief. It directed the revenue authorities to restore the petitioner's name as the absolute owner of the 2.4 acres of land in all official records.

Hullabaloo in Sandalwood: Gimmicks and slander rule the roost

Wave of accusations from figures of Kannada film industry sparks controversy; fans enraged over alleged defamation of late Puneeth Rajkumar, threaten protests

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FILE PHOTO

Puneeth Rajkumar fans have warned of protests at theatres screening 'Cottonpete'; Inset (Above): Director Prem submitting complaint to KFCC President, (Below): R Srinivas talking to media

Allegations by producer R Srinivas have invited criticism and several complaints have been lodged against him at various police stations, with many terming his claims to be completely baseless

Recent spate of allegations and counter allegations by a producer and directors has been creating a mess in Sandalwood. Producer R Srinivas aka Kanakapura Srinivas made a few shocking claims during his interaction with the media for his upcoming film 'Cottonpete'. He termed a few well-known actors and directors as 'good-for-nothing'. He even claimed that he had given a huge amount of money to late Puneeth Rajkumar to act in a Kannada movie titled 'Mayura', but the project got shelved due to the untimely death of the director, Shobhan, who was supposed to helm the movie.

Srinivas also came down heavily on director-cum-actor R Prem, the husband of heroine Rakshitha who was paired opposite Puneeth Rajkumar in Appu. Srinivas claimed that Prem took money to direct a movie but cheated him. He also blamed director AP Arjun and actor Dhruva Sarja for allegedly not honouring their commitments.

His outbursts and allegations have invited criticism from Puneeth Rajkumar's fans and several complaints have been lodged against Srinivas at various police stations for making baseless allegations against the actor. The fans have also warned of protests outside theatres screening the forthcoming 'Cottonpete'.

"We condemn producer Srinivas for making baseless allegations against our hero Dr Puneeth Rajkumar. Our hero has nothing to do with the shelving of Mayura. The movie got shelved due to the director's untimely death. It is the producer's responsibility to find another director to continue the shooting. After Puneeth Rajkumar's death, Ashwini ma'am returned the money paid by Srinivas. What else did he need? Why is he unnecessarily blaming Puneeth Rajkumar? I demand police to take action against him," said Akhila Karnataka Dr Rajumar Abhimanigala Sangha Honorary President Ramesh NR.

Director-cum-actor R Prem, too, has lodged a complaint with KP Agrahara Police, stating Srinivas has made baseless allegations against him. He also lodged a complaint with Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce President Jayamala, urging her to take action against the producer. "I have been associated with the Kannada film industry for more than 25 years. I did not commit any mistake or cheat anyone during my career. R Srinivas, along with KP Srikanth, approached me to direct a movie in 2004. He gave me Rs 9 lakh (Rs 5 lakh in cash and a cheque for Rs 4 lakh) as an advance amount. However, the producer did not support the movie and later I returned the Rs 5 lakh to him..." the complaint read

Private mini aircraft crashes in Vijayapura

Two people, including the pilot, had a narrow escape when a private mini aircraft crashed into an open field in the district on Sunday afternoon, police sources said.

The two-seater aircraft crashed at Mangaluru village in Babaleshwar Taluk of Vijayapura district, they said.

Both the occupants ejected before it crashed, sources said, adding the aircraft broke into three pieces. The duo sustained injuries and have been rushed to a hospital, they added.

The training aircraft was said to be flying from Kalaburagi to Belagavi, though more details are awaited. **–PTI**

AIDSO demands rollback of IISc fee hike

A protest demonstration was held near the Kuvempu statue in Malleswaram on Saturday after the All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) opposed the Indian Institute of Science's (IISc) decision to sharply increase tuition fees. The agitation followed IISc's announcement that fees for its undergraduate Bachelor of Science (BS) programme would rise from Rs 10,000 to Rs 80,000 per annum from the 2026–27 academic year, marking a 700 per cent hike.

Raising slogans against the "commercialisation" of premier educational institutions, protesters said the move would severely limit access to higher education for students. Addressing the gathering, AIDSO State Treasurer Subhash BJ said the steep increase threatened the affordability of one of India's top science institutes and warned that proposed revisions to PG and PhD fees could further impact research education. AIDSO demanded an immediate rollback of the hike and urged the government to enhance funding for public research institutions. **–BMB**

BangaloreSehri connects thousands to free Sehri

Created by tech volunteers, BangaloreSehri helps thousands begin their fast with dignity by mapping free Sehri providers across Bengaluru city every Ramzaan

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For thousands of Muslim students and young professionals living away from home in Bengaluru, observing Ramadan while staying in hostels and paying guest accommodations comes with daily challenges. Limited kitchen access, strict hostel rules and early-morning restrictions—especially for women—often make it difficult to step out for Sehri before dawn. This largely unseen but widespread problem prompted a group of Bengaluru-based tech professionals to create BangaloreSehri, a simple digital platform that is now helping tens of thousands observe their fast with dignity and ease.

Accessible through bangaloresehri.in, the platform allows users to locate pre-dawn meal providers in their area. By dropping a Google pin or selecting their nearest zone, users can view contact details of nearby masjids offering Sehri free of cost. The initiative acts purely as a facilitator, connecting those in need with places willing to help. "Our goal was very simple," said Tauseef Ahmed, Director of Active Bengaluru Foundation, the city-based NGO that owns and runs BangaloreSehri. "Students and working professionals come to Bengaluru from across the country. They want to keep their roza peacefully, but many don't have the time, space, or permission to cook or step out early in the morning. We wanted to remove that stress."

The initiative was first launched during the Covid-19 pandemic and was built entirely by volunteers from Bengaluru's tech community. BangaloreSehri does not cook, deliver food, or collect donations. Instead, it compiles verified information about masjids and service providers willing to offer Sehri.

What began with 15 to 20 masjids has expanded steadily, with nearly 100 participating last Ramadan and over 125 masjids and hotels distributing Sehri across Bengaluru this year

"We designed a Google form, received requests and segregated the data area-wise," Ahmed explained. "We listed masjids along with location details and contact numbers. People could call directly and arrange their Sehri. In many cases, masjid volunteers themselves delivered food to the doorstep."

The team soon realised that women living in hostels or PGs faced additional restrictions on stepping out at dawn. In response, they requested participating masjids to arrange home delivery wherever possible, a step that significantly expanded the platform's reach and impact.

What began with just 15 to 20 masjids has grown steadily over the years. Last Ramadan, nearly 100 masjids participated. This year, over 125 masjids, along with a few hotels, are distributing Sehri across Bengaluru. Many masjids now proactively approach BangaloreSehri to be listed. Importantly, the platform does not accept donations. "We don't cook, we don't deliver, and we don't collect money," Ahmed said. "The masjids and service providers do everything. We are just the medium."

Last year alone, more than 50,000 people received Sehri through the platform. The model has drawn interest from cities such as Tumakuru, Chitradurga, Mandya, Pune and Kolkata. "Ramadan is about helping one another," Ahmed said. "This is the city quietly ensuring no one goes hungry before dawn."

5,000-year-old burial site found in Ballari

Archaeologists have uncovered a 5,000-year-old human skeleton, burial pottery and other artefacts at Tekkalakote in Ballari district, marking a major prehistoric discovery. Excavations are under way at several sites, led by three teams of national and international experts. According to Prof Namita S Sugandhi of Hartwick University, USA, the findings are exceptional as they reveal continuous evidence from the Stone Age, Neolithic period and early Metal Age. This helps researchers trace human activity dating back between 3,500 and 5,000 years, establishing Tekkalakote as a key centre for Neolithic studies.

The burial practices identified are rare and archaeologically significant. Evidence suggests bodies were buried with stones placed over them, while human remains were also kept inside large pots measuring up to two and a half feet. Pottery of varying sizes and designs containing bones indicates organised funerary rituals followed by Neolithic communities in the region. **— BMB**

Air taxis using rooftops can ease traffic: Report

Air taxis, along with rooftop take-offs and landings, could help ease urban transport congestion by addressing infrastructure bottlenecks and reducing travel time, according to a report. Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing eVTOL aircraft, commonly called air taxis, remain at a nascent stage within the emerging Advanced Air Mobility ecosystem and require specialised vertiports.

The report, prepared by industry body CII, recommends dedicated financing tools including venture leasing and sector-specific infrastructure funds to support AAM growth. Rooftop vertiports are highlighted as efficient, scalable solutions for dense cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru. Current regulations bar routine commercial rooftop operations. The report suggests phased trials starting with drone deliveries, medical logistics, organ transport and air ambulance services, while modelling a 65–75 km corridor linking Gurugram, Connaught Place and upcoming Jewar airport in NCR region. **— BMB**

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Clean Bowled

Recently, Minister for Women and Child Welfare Laxmi Hebbalkar surprised everyone when she bowled out an MLA. At the indoor box cricket arena in Belagavi, Hebbalkar stole the spotlight by bowling a sharp, well-paced delivery that beat the bat and crashed into the stumps, clean bowling Belagavi North MLA Asif Sait. The moment drew loud applause and laughter from those present, adding to the festive mood of the event. The friendly match, played after the inauguration, saw ministers and legislators shedding protocol to enjoy a light-hearted game, underlining the celebratory spirit of the occasion.

High Command Jibe

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar took a sharp swipe at reports quoting Yathindra Siddaramaiah as saying that his father would remain Chief Minister for the next five years with the "high command's green signal". Speaking to reporters at Mangaluru airport on Friday, Shivakumar remarked sarcastically that for the next five years, "he himself seems to be the high command", making it clear that such statements should not be taken seriously and that decisions of this nature rest only with the party leadership.

House uproar

CM Siddaramaiah lost his composure in the Assembly recently, lashing out not only at BJP and JD(S) members but also expressing sharp displeasure with Speaker UT Khader over the way the House was being conducted. The flashpoint came during discussions on the alleged excise kickback case and the presentation of a resolution related to MGNREGA, when opposition members repeatedly interrupted proceedings. An angry Siddaramaiah warned the Speaker, asking whether this was the way to run the House, demanded that disrupting members be marshalled out, and even threatened to boycott future Business Advisory Committee meetings if such conduct continued.

Digital fast

In an unusual awareness drive aimed at improving SSLC results, the Education Department in Badami taluk has decided to push for a nightly "digital fast", urging parents to keep children away from mobile phones and television for at least two hours every evening. The initiative, being rolled out mainly in rural areas, focuses on ensuring that students study from 7 pm to 9 pm every day without distractions from gadgets. To spread the message, the department plans to announce the appeal through drum beating in villages, along with audio messages broadcast from garbage collection vehicles. The idea is to create community-level awareness so that parents actively support their children during the crucial exam preparation phase.

RSS banter

The Assembly recently witnessed a brief but sharp exchange between BJP MLA Munirathna and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar during a discussion on faulty streetlights in RR Nagar. Raising the issue, Munirathna said several streetlights near the Sumanahalli flyover did not exist at all, while only around 60 out of 100 lights functioned despite claims of repairs. Responding, Shivakumar recalled a past meeting convened to address the issue and took a swipe at Munirathna's conduct, triggering a round of sarcastic remarks. Munirathna hit back by saying Shivakumar was a senior hand in the RSS and had learnt the song 'Namasthe Sada Vatsale' long before him. Shivakumar, smiling, replied that Munirathna was trained in his own akhara and that the meeting had been called with due respect, ending the exchange.

PhD honours

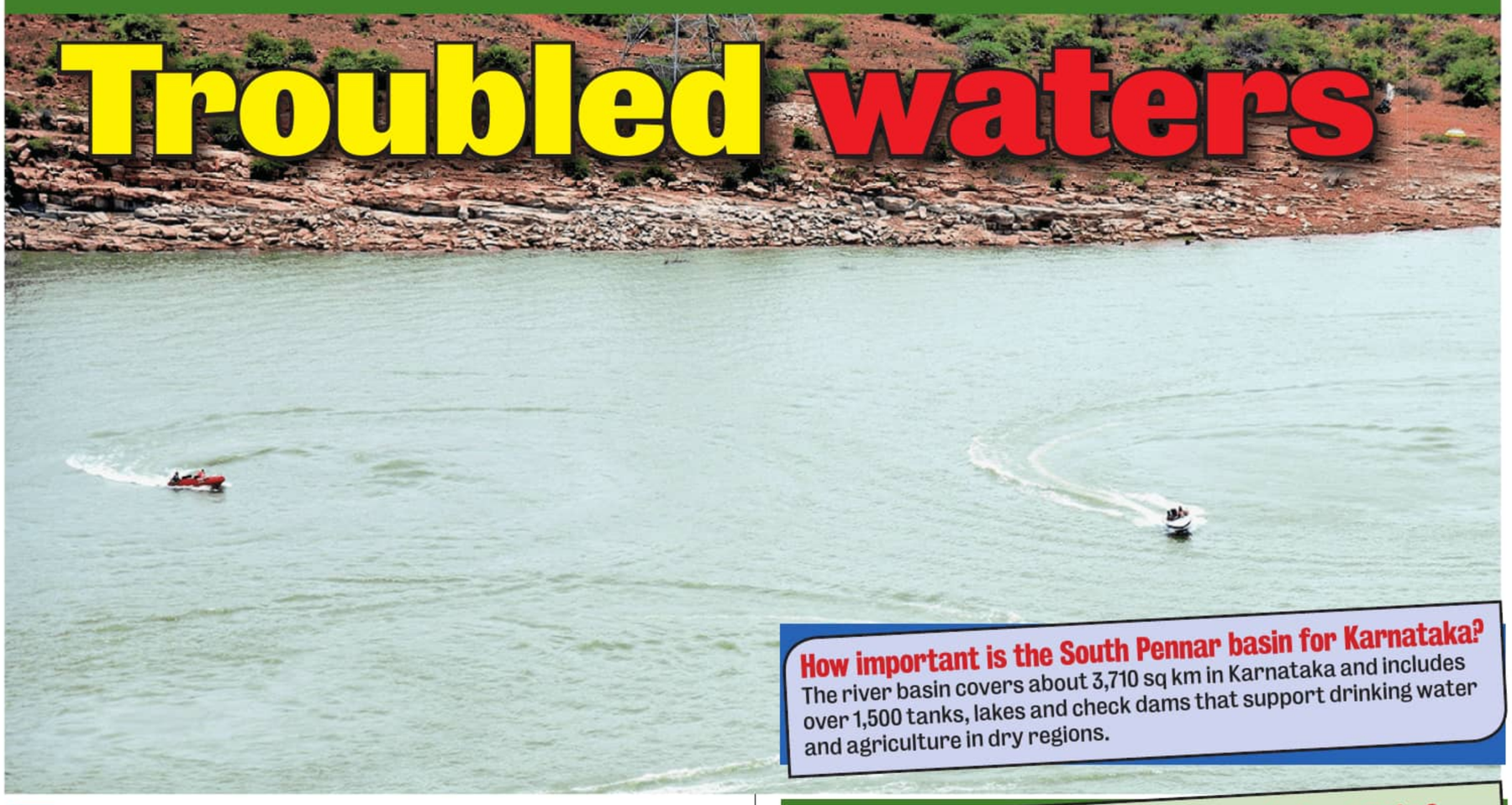
Coalition governments formed the core of BJM MLC C T Ravi's doctoral research, with his PhD awarded for an in-depth study on how coalition politics in India has evolved, the challenges it faces and the role it has played in governance. By comparatively analysing UPA and NDA coalition governments over four years of sustained research, Ravi examined how alliance-based administrations function, adapt and influence political stability, which ultimately earned him the PhD from Karnataka State Open University.

iPads or laptops

During the recent session, Speaker UT Khader said he was planning to distribute iPads to MLAs, but made it clear that they would be given only to those who undergo a three-day training programme, as some members might otherwise gift the devices to friends or hand them over to their PAs due to inability to use them. Reacting to this, BJP MLA Prabhu Chauhan said it would be better to give laptops instead of iPads. Khader responded that he could consider the suggestion if there was a guarantee that only the MLA concerned would use the device personally and won't hand it over to anyone else. **— Sridhar Vivan**

BM SIMPLY PUT

What SC's directive for South Pennar river dispute means for Karnataka and Tamil Nadu



The Supreme Court's directive to form a tribunal on sharing South Pennar river water has sparked anxiety in Karnataka's drought-prone districts. With Bengaluru and surrounding regions dependent on the river basin, the issue goes beyond legalities and into drinking water security. Here is a clear explainer on what the dispute is about and why it matters.

What is the South Pennar river and where does it flow?
The South Pennar originates at Nandi Hills near Chikkaballapura, flows through Bengaluru Rural, Bengaluru Urban and Kolar districts, enters Tamil Nadu and finally joins the Bay of Bengal near Cuddalore.

Why has Tamil Nadu raised an objection now?
Tamil Nadu alleges that Karnataka is using most of the South Pennar water through dams and check dams, resulting in insufficient water flowing into its districts such as Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri.

When did the dispute reach the Supreme Court?
Tamil Nadu filed a petition in the Supreme Court in 2018 objecting to water usage and infrastructure projects undertaken by Karnataka on the river.

What has the Supreme Court ordered?
The Supreme Court has directed the Union government to constitute a tribunal to adjudicate and decide on the sharing of South Pennar river water between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Why is Karnataka concerned about a tribunal?
Karnataka fears that a tribunal could mandate water sharing similar to the Cauvery dispute, leading to reduced availability of water for its already drought-hit regions.

How important is the South Pennar basin for Karnataka?
The river basin covers about 3,710 sq km in Karnataka and includes over 1,500 tanks, lakes and check dams that support drinking water and agriculture in dry regions.

What about river rejuvenation efforts in Karnataka?
Multiple agencies and organisations have been working on rejuvenation projects across 238 gram panchayats in Kolar and Chikkaballapura districts to improve groundwater recharge and water availability.

Why does Tamil Nadu oppose check dams in Karnataka?
Tamil Nadu argues that check dams near Markandeya dam and Yeragol reduce downstream flow, affecting reservoirs near Hosur and the Sathanur dam which depend on the South Pennar.

How does this dispute compare with the Cauvery issue?
Like the Cauvery dispute, this involves inter-state river sharing and could lead to prolonged legal, political and social tensions between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

What do irrigation activists in Karnataka say?
They warn that forming a tribunal would severely impact drought affected districts and call it a threat to drinking water security in the dry belt.

What is the key demand from Karnataka stakeholders now?
They are urging the state government to file a review petition in the Supreme Court and present evidence of drought conditions and drinking water dependence before any tribunal is formed.

Why does this issue matter for Bengaluru?
Parts of Bengaluru and its surrounding districts fall within the South Pennar basin, and any reduction in water availability could worsen the city's already fragile water situation.

Ranji Trophy: Rahul's unbeaten fifty hands K'taka edge against Mumbai

India batter KL Rahul hit a fine half-century to hand Karnataka a slight edge over Mumbai at stumps on the third day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal on Sunday.

Chasing 325, Rahul was unbeaten on 60 off 94 balls with the help of seven boundaries and together with captain Devdutt Padikkal (39), shared 84 runs for the second wicket to help Karnataka end the day at 113 for two in 29 overs, needing another 212 runs to register an outright win.

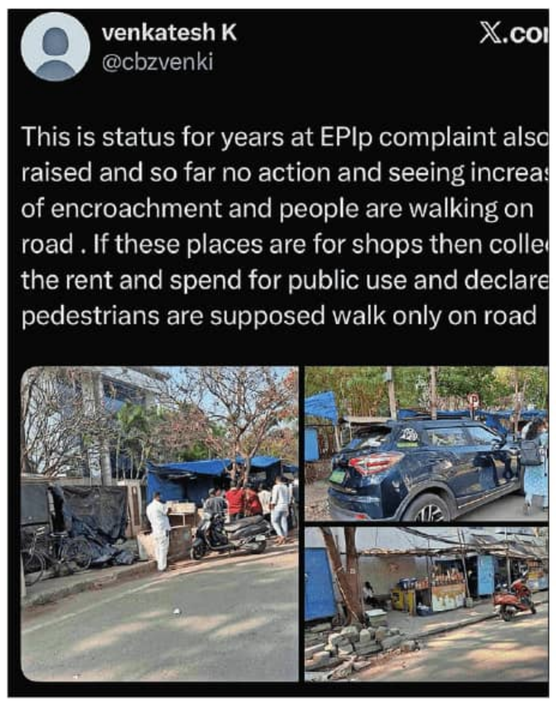
Left-arm spinner Shikhar Shetty was the pick of the bowlers for Karnataka in Mumbai's second essay with figures of 3/45. He was ably supported by right-arm medium pacers Vidyadhar Patil (2/78) and Vidwath Kaverappa (2/78).

Sent into bowl, Karnataka bundled out Mumbai for 120 and then struggled to 173 to take the vital first innings lead.

For Mumbai, India opener Yashavi Jaiswal struggled in both the innings, scoring 5 and 36 respectively. Seasoned pacers Mohit Avasthi (4/27) and Deshpande (4/33) spearheaded a strong Mumbai comeback, picking up 4 wickets each. –PTI

SOCIALTATTLE

THAT WENT VIRAL

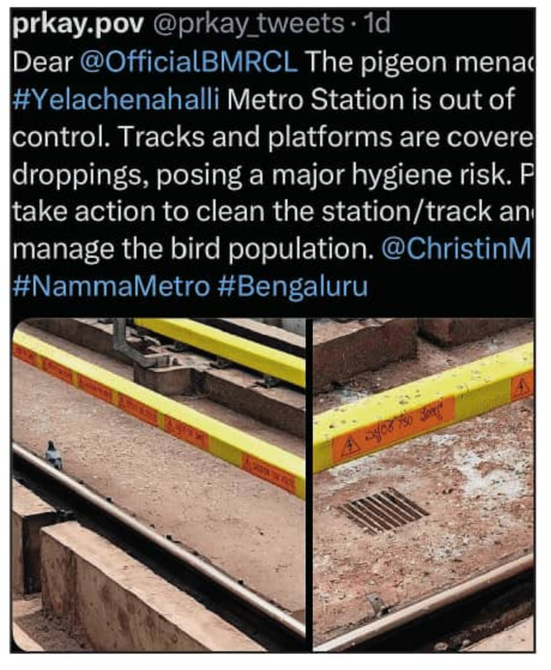

venkatesh K
@cbzvenki
This is status for years at EPIp complaint also raised and so far no action and seeing increas of encroachment and people are walking on road . If these places are for shops then colle the rent and spend for public use and declare pedestrians are supposed walk only on road

A social media user highlighted that years of complaints remain unaddressed, encroachment is rising, and pedestrians are forced onto roads. Shops should pay rent, fund public use, and keep sidewalks clear.

WHAT'S TWEETING

@lalitgrateful posted a picture of commuters stuck in traffic and said, while divided by TCS, Infosys, Wipro, Accenture, and Tech Mahindra, all Bengaluru commuters are united by the city's notorious traffic congestion.

Platform x User user highlighted that the pigeon menace at #Yelachenahalli Metro Station is out of control, with platforms and tracks covered in droppings, posing serious hygiene risks, urging BMRCL to act.


prkay.pov @prkay_tweets · 1d
Dear @OfficialBMRCL The pigeon menac
#Yelachenahalli Metro Station is out of control. Tracks and platforms are covere droppings, posing a major hygiene risk. P take action to clean the station/track an manage the bird population. @ChristinM
#NammaMetro #Bengaluru

'Trade unions' role can't be reduced to obstacle to economic development'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to impose a uniform mandate.

The Bench concluded that concerns relating to the welfare of domestic workers must be addressed by governments and lawmakers, and not through judicial directions, leading to the dismissal of the petition.

The city-based Domestic Workers Rights Union (DWRU) and other allied groups issued a joint statement recently, after the apex court disposed of their writ petition, arguing that their claims—rooted in the constitutional guarantees of equality and non-discrimination—were assessed through what they described as "prevailing social assumptions" that privilege patriarchal family structures and employer convenience over the rights of some of the country's poorest women workers.

"The CJI must uphold constitutional rights. They cannot erase out a whole sector that invisibly works for them and for the economy," said Geeta Menon, General Secretary of the Domestic Workers Rights Union (DWRU), Karnataka.

The unions contended that the dismissal of the petition failed to meaningfully engage with decades of collective struggle by domestic workers and ignored material placed before the court. They also argued that the ruling did not adequately consider the constitutional implications of Article 23, which prohibits forced labour, despite submissions highlighting exploitative working conditions in the sector.

Activists pointed out that while the Karnataka government has recently released the Draft Karnataka Domestic Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Bill, 2025, the proposed legislation does not provide a clear mandate for minimum wages or establish enforceable rights for domestic workers.

Despite the legal setback, the unions said they remain committed to continuing their movement, asserting that they would persist in organising, resisting, and campaigning for statutory recognition and meaningful legal protection for domestic workers.

CJI urged to withdraw remarks

A collective of lawyers, academics and others from All India Lawyers Association for Justice (AILAJ) among other organisations have written an open letter to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, urging him to withdraw remarks. The letter argues that the observations made dilute constitutional guarantees available to workers in the informal sector.

The signatories expressed concern over remarks suggesting that fixing minimum wages for domestic work could adversely affect employment and interfere with household functioning. They contended that such reasoning wrongly portrays labour protections as an obstacle, rather than as a constitutional mandate. According to the letter, the observations risk normalising the denial of minimum wages to a large and vulnerable workforce, predominantly comprising women.

The letter cautioned that this approach risks legitimising exploitation of a largely invisible workforce, observing that "work, sans minimum wages, ceases to be work and becomes forced labour which the Constitution of India forbids". Taking strong exception to remarks critical of trade unions, the letter noted that the suggestion that "regressive trade union practices" were responsible for slowing industrial growth has "no basis whatsoever". The signatories emphasised that trade unions have historically played a crucial role in securing fair wages, humane working conditions and collective bargaining, and that their role cannot be reduced to an obstacle to economic development.

Addressing the nature of domestic work, the letter underscored that the private setting of employment cannot be a justification for denying basic labour rights. It stated that "someone's home is somebody else's workplace," and added that the absence of minimum wage protection leaves domestic workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation and arbitrary treatment. It further pointed out that domestic work is already recognised as scheduled employment in several states, where minimum wages are prescribed and enforced.

This, the letter said, demonstrates that regulation of domestic work is neither impractical nor unprecedented. It also reiterated that the right of workers to organise through unions is protected under Article 19(1)(c) of the Constitution and forms a cornerstone of democratic participation.

Raising broader constitutional concerns, the letter observed that judicial remarks, even when made during hearings, carry authority and shape public understanding of rights. It urged the Chief Justice to reconsider and withdraw the remarks, stating that such a step would reaffirm the judiciary's commitment to social justice, dignity of labour and the constitutional promise of equality for all workers.

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I Basavaraju Chikkakempaiah S/o Chikkakempaiah, R/o. # 256, Kalkere, Horamavu, Blr-560043, have changed my name to Kalkere Chikkakempaiah Basavaraju vide affidavit Dt: 07/02/26 before Notary M. Rajendra, Blr.

I, Venugopal R S/o T Ramu have changed my name from Venugopala R to Venugopal R born on 08/12/1971 residing at new 180, old 249, Kumara Rama rd, Lakshmipura, Hanumantha Nagar, Blr 19 vide aff dated 02.02.26 at Blr.

I Radhika Karthikeyan, daughter of R.Velu #227 8th D main road , 1st block HRBR layout kalyan nagar Bangalore 560043 have changed my name to Radhika Velu for all purposes

I, MUJEEB UR RAHAMAN, S/o Veppampattum Moulana Shaji Mohamed, residing at No.156, 5th Cross, Royal Shelter, near Yellamma Temple Devarachikkanahalli, Bangalore-560076, have changed my name to MUJEEBUR RAHAMAN S vide affidavit dated 04.02.2026 before DHARANI.P, Bengaluru.

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OMKARESHWAR MAHAKALESHWAR 8 DAYS MAR: 3, 17
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NEPAL WITH MUKHINATH 13 DAYS MAR: 5, 18 APR: 2, 12, 23
KASHI GAYA PRAYAG/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS
MAR: 22, 22* APR: 11, 17, 26, 27* MAY: 1, 3*, 7, 13*, 17, 25
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MAR: 4, 8*, 15*, 22* APR: 1, 1*, 8*, 15, 15*, 22*
CHAR DHAM 19 DAYS APR: 25 MAY: 1, 6, 9, 12, 16, 24, 27, 31
ANDAMAN 6 DAYS FEB: 18 MAR: 4, 24

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Patil meets Ashwini Vaishnaw, seeks approval for Vande Bharat Sleeper train

Karnataka Infrastructure Development Minister MB Patil has submitted representations to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, seeking approval for a Vande Bharat Sleeper Express train from Bengaluru to Vijayapura, a high-speed rail corridor between Bengaluru and Mumbai, and a daily special train service on the Bengaluru-Vijayapura route.

After launching an electronics manufacturing facility in the Hi-Tech Hardware Park at Bagalur on Saturday, the Minister met Vaishnaw at the venue and handed over the representations. The Railway Minister assured him that the proposals would be examined positively.

Describing Bengaluru as the country's technology capital and Mumbai as its financial capital, Patil said it was essential to connect the two cities through an efficient and modern transport system. He urged that the high-speed rail corridor announced between Mumbai and Pune be extended up to Bengaluru. Vaishnaw responded positively to this request as well.

The State Minister pointed out that the distance between Bengaluru and Vijayapura is around 530 km and that the current train journey takes nearly 15 to 16 hours. He said this travel time should be reduced to about 10 hours.

To achieve this, he suggested limiting halts between Bengaluru and Hubballi and operating trains via the Hubballi and Gadag bypasses. He also sought the introduction of a Vande Bharat Express service on this route. **IANS**

Indigenous seeds collected from 586 farmers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

but to bring forgotten indigenous varieties back into cultivation," said Dr GT Putra, Director, Agriculture Department. "Hybrid crops and chemical-intensive farming have dominated agriculture in recent years, but they do not always provide nutritional security or climate resilience. Through this programme, we want to identify native varieties suited to local conditions, improve them scientifically and make them available to farmers again."

The project has moved beyond documentation. In the first phase, 20 crops have been cultivated at eight selected locations for evaluation. About 15 varieties are currently being grown on an experimental basis, with scientists assessing their physical traits, yield potential and nutritional value.

Once this stage is complete, the seeds will be purified, followed by genomic studies and detailed nutrient analysis. Only then will they be released for wider cultivation.

Better outreach

Bengaluru-based officials say the city plays a crucial role not just in research but also in outreach. Farmers who still possess traditional seeds can register through the K-Kisan mobile app and hand them over to the Agriculture Department. "We are seeing good participation from farmers who have conserved seeds for decades without recognition," an official said, adding that incentives are being provided to those who have safeguarded native varieties.

According to the department, the community seed bank model being implemented is designed to reduce farmers' dependence on expensive commercial seeds and improve genetic diversity in crops. Climate change, erratic rainfall and rising temperatures have made many hybrid varieties vulnerable, while several desi crops are naturally resilient.

Nepal's chase powered by strong partnerships, but England's bowlers struck at crucial moments

England edge past Nepal by 4 runs in thrilling clash

England narrowly defeated Nepal by four runs in a T20 World Cup match full of twists and turns at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday.

For Three Lions, Jacob Bethell and Harry Brook contributed with crucial half-centuries, while Jos Buttler climbed past Mahela Jayawardene to become the third-highest run-scorer in T20 World Cup history.

Nepal's chase was powered by strong partnerships from Rohit Paudel and Dipendra Singh Airee, but England's bowlers struck at crucial moments, leaving the underdogs just short of the target.

ENGLAND 184/7 (20)

NEPAL 180/6 (20)

Batting first, England were off to a sloppy start after Sher Malla got the wicket of the dangerous Phil Salt in the second over. Salt departed after scoring just one run.

Wicketkeeper-batter Jos Buttler and Jacob Bethell then stitched 38 runs together for the second wicket at a brisk pace before Nepal struck again during the fifth over. Nandan Yadav dismissed Jos Buttler (26 off 17, with five boundaries).

England managed to amass 57/2 runs in the power play. Still, their troubles deepened immediately after as leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane struck with the first ball post the powerplay, trapping Tom Banton lbw. Banton departed after scoring just two runs.

Bethell and captain Harry Brook then led the fightback with a crucial 71-run partnership for the fourth wicket.

Bethell departed after scoring 55 off 34 balls after the left-handed batter fell to the bowling of Dipendra Singh Airee.

Harry Brook completed his half-century, a knock of 53 off 32 balls, before Nandan Yadav got his second wicket of the match by dismissing the English skipper. Jack's blistering, unbeaten knock of 39 off 18 helped England reach a total of 184.

After hitting a half-century, Bethell also joined Kevin Pietersen to become the second Englishman to score a fifty on T20 World Cup debut. Meanwhile, Buttler overtook Mahela Jayawardene to become the third-highest run-getter in T20 World Cup history.

Sam Curran and Tom Banton of England celebrate victory during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup match between England and Nepal at Wankhede Stadium on Sunday

For Nepal, Sher Malla (1/35), Dipendra Singh Airee (2/23), Nandan Yadav (2/25), and Sandeep Lamichhane (1/25) were among the wicket-takers.

Chasing 185, Nepal started brilliantly, racing to 31/0 in three overs, thanks to Kushal Bhurtel and Aasif Sheikh.

England struck back as Liam Dawson picked up the wicket of Aasif Sheikh, followed soon after by Will Jacks dismissing the dangerous Kushal Bhurtel for 29 off 17 balls. Nepal slumped to 47/2 in the powerplay.

Skipper Rohit Paudel and Dipendra Singh Airee then piled on the pressure on the England bowlers. The pair stitched an unbeaten 59-run partnership to take Nepal to 101/1 at the end of the 12th over. However, during the 15th over, Sam Curran got the much-needed wicket as he removed Dipendra Singh Airee (44 off 29, with six fours and one six) as Nepal reached 125/3. Curran also broke the 82-run stand for the third wicket.

In the very next over, skipper Rohit Paudel (39 off 34) fell to Liam Dawson as Nepal lost their two wickets in quick succession. Towards the end, Lokesh Bam's unbeaten 20-ball 39, with four boundaries and two sixes, went in vain as Nepal made 180/6 in 20 overs, losing the nail-biter. **–ANI**

Today's matches

Scotland	V/S	Italy
11.00 am		
Zimbabwe	V/S	Oman
03.00 pm		
South Africa	V/S	Canada
07.00 pm		

Seifert after match-winning 65 against Afghanistan

'Nice to start with a few runs under your belt'

Tim Seifert's calm yet aggressive knock set the tone as New Zealand opened their T20 World Cup campaign with a confident five-wicket win over Afghanistan on Sunday, chasing down 183 with 15 balls to spare, and the 31-year-old said that he felt good to have gotten a few runs under his belt at the start of the tournament amid 'tough conditions' at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Named Player of the Match for his decisive 65 off 42 balls, Seifert played a pivotal role in steadying New Zealand after an early wobble.

"Personally, it's always nice to start the tournament with a few runs under your belt. But the main thing is we got the win. Tough conditions as well out there. Lost a couple of early wickets, so it's nice to get the job done," he said during the post-match presentation, reflecting on his innings and the importance of the result.

New Zealand were reduced to 14/2 inside the first two overs after Finn Allen and Rachin Ravindra fell cheaply to Mujeeb Ur Rahman, giving Afghanistan early momentum. Seifert, however, counterpunched to ensure the chase stayed on track.

Explaining New Zealand's approach and the conditions on offer in the powerplay, Seifert said, "For us, myself and Finn, we always looked to try and put pressure on the bowlers and we thought pace was going to be easier than spin. And then we just adapted throughout the innings there. And then I thought sometimes the spin actually came a little bit easier than the seam. So it went my way, it's all about the momentum and who you're going to target throughout the innings."

Seifert's fluent strokeplay, featuring seven fours and three sixes, swung momentum decisively New Zealand's way. His 74-run stand with

New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell (L) is congratulated by Afghanistan's captain Rashid Khan for his team's win at the endof the match between Afghanistan and New Zealand at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Sunday

Glenn Phillips, who struck a rapid 42 off 25 balls, put the Kiwis firmly ahead of the required rate. Even after Seifert's dismissal in the 13th over, New Zealand's depth ensured there were no hiccups, with Daryl Mitchell and skipper Mitchell Santner finishing the chase clinically.

Asked about his consistency and preparation across formats and conditions, Seifert pointed to adaptability, saying, "Oh, yeah, there's always something you're working on, but I think it's just the experience of playing around the world and in some of these franchise leagues and playing with the best players in the world and, you know, adapting to every condition basically out there and also just backing yourself how you want to go about your game."

Afghanistan posted a competitive 182/6, built around Gulbadin Naib's 63 off 35 balls, but New Zealand's composure in the chase proved decisive. **–IANS**

Sri Lanka beat Ireland by 20 runs

Sri Lanka's heroes pull them through despite costly mistakes

A win is a win... That's what the Lankans would say. This is a World Cup and every opposition can be dangerous. They will introspect of course, be it their shoddy batting or indisciplined bowling in the first half of both innings. But they will revel in the fact that with their backs against the wall, they found heroes across both innings - the two Mendises with the bat and Wanindu Hasaranga with one leg. Of course, Theekshana bowled well too.

Kusal Mendis scored a gritty unbeaten half-century, while Kamindu Mendis played a crucial cameo of 44 from 19 balls, as Sri Lanka overcame a sluggish start to post a fighting 163 for 6 in their T20 World Cup clash against Ireland here on Sunday.

Ireland bowlers, led by George Dockrell (2/17), kept a tight grip on the innings after they opted to bowl.

But Mendis fought a determined rearguard, scoring an unbeaten 56 off 43 deliveries after Sri Lanka had slipped to 68 for 3 by the 11th over.

Kamindu then played a vital hand, smashing four boundaries and two sixes to add respectability to Sri Lanka's total.

Sri Lanka's Wanindu Hasaranga, center, celebrates with teammates the wicket of Ireland's Ross Adair

Unwanted record

Sri Lanka captain Dasun Shanaka achieved an unwanted record, becoming the batter to score the most zeroes in T20 International when he got out for a duck in their match against Ireland in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Sunday.

Shanaka was out for a first-ball duck when he miscued a swing at a thigh-high full toss on off, but his attempt for a big six skewed for a leading edge which was caught by Mark Adair at short third, taking it perilously close to the ground, despite the ball being in the air for a long time, giving him lot of time to get into position. For some time, there were doubts that the ball was aimed too high at the waist and could be a no-ball. But the ball tracker showed it was 16 cm below the waist and thus a legal delivery, and Shanaka had to leave the field. This was the 16th zero scored by Shanaka, breaking the unwanted record held by Zappy Bimenyimana of Rwanda, who has compiled 15 zeroes in 62 matches. **–Agencies**

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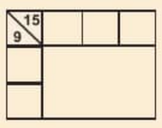
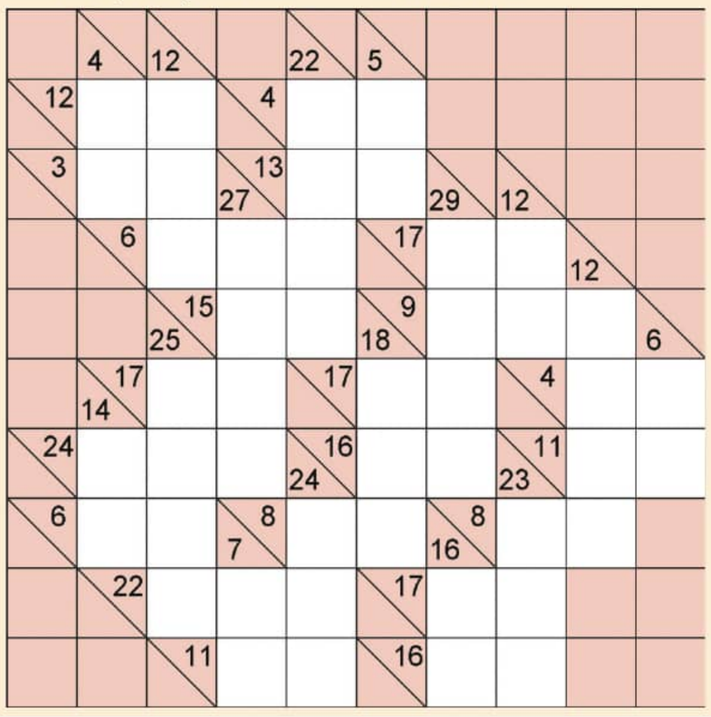
Kakuro

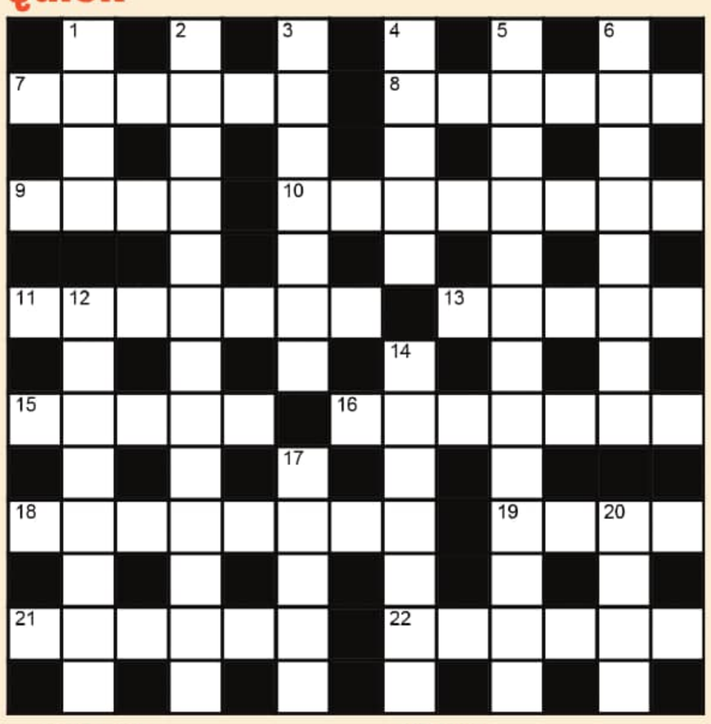
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Very small (6)
8 Capital of the UK (6)
9 Art movement (4)
10 Inspected (8)
11 Hospital on Airport road (7)
13 Mountain Ben ___ (5)
15 Scottish farm (5)
16 In an ___ : in a very short while? (7)
18 Make the least of (8)
19 Actor Guinness (4)
21 Condescends (6)
22 Trouble or worry (6)

DOWN

1 Prima donna (4)
2 The more extreme members of a group or community (7,6)
3 Film maker Shyam ____ (7)
4 Appeals or entreaties (5)
5 Beset by difficulties (2,4,7)
6 Funny man (8)
12 Indigo, Air India, etc (8)
14 Uganda's former capital (7)
17 Slightly drunk (5)
20 Female sheep (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: L EQUALS R

MKLLA QN QXPTLTNP RFQG KX PLKEYCT YTHKLT QP VKJTN GET.

Linemaro

Are you a magician? Everytime I look at you, everything else disappears

Mindchow

You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop

Joke of the day

Why do birds fly south in the winter? Because it's too far to walk!

Loop

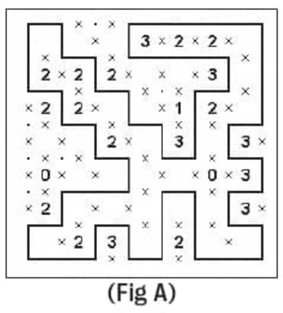
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

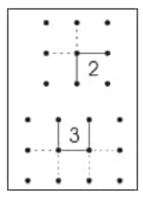
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

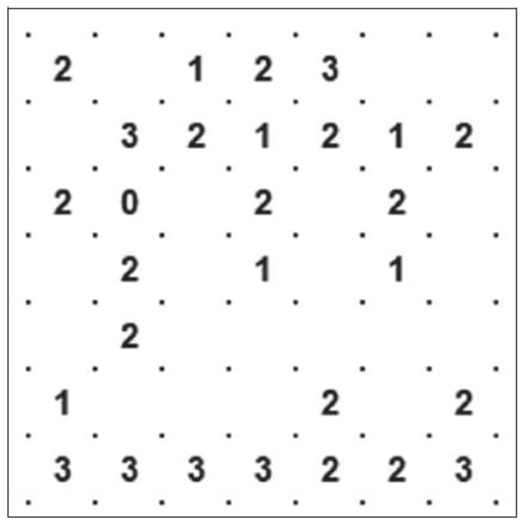
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



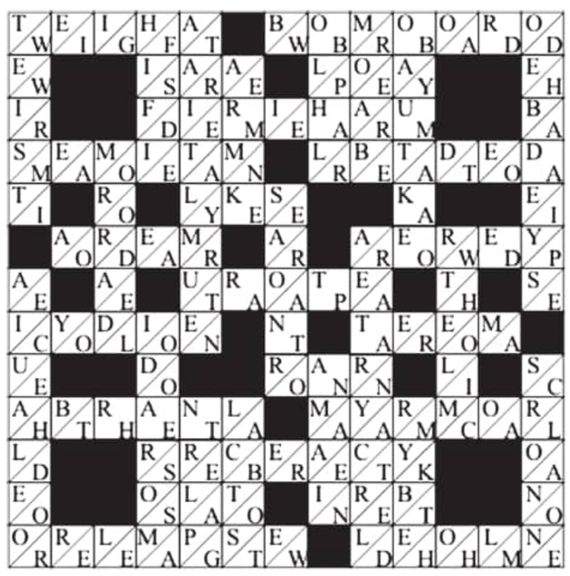
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5 H
6				
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Hot RC; 6 Peary; 7 Id pep; 8 R aura; 9 Mokos

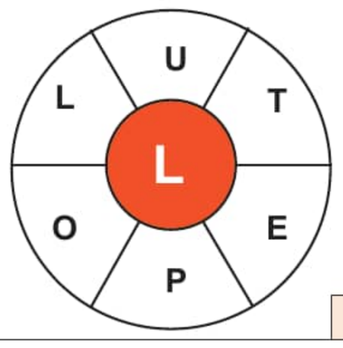
DOWN

1 Pasta; 2 O I'm up; 3 Roper; 4 Crake; 5 DH Roy

Mensapuzzle

Which letter finishes off the third triangle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

09 Average; 10 Good; 12 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		7	4		3	8		
8								7
	1			9			4	
	2	8	5		9	6	7	
	3	9	6		7	2	1	
	9			2			5	
5								4
		1	8		6	7		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 21

1 4 8 8

Medium = 8

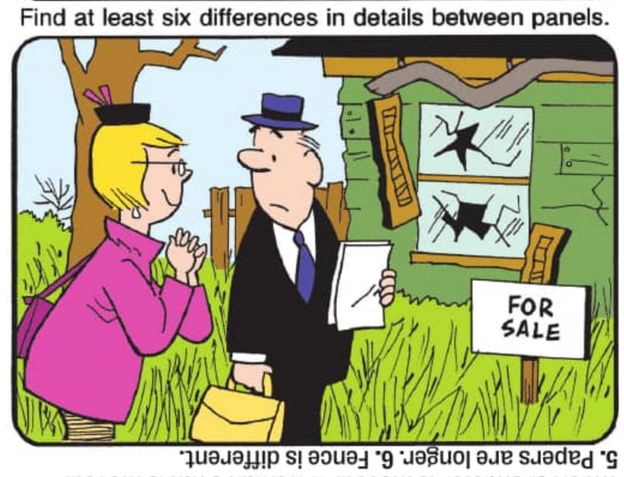
3 3 6 8

Hard = 15

2 2 8 3

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



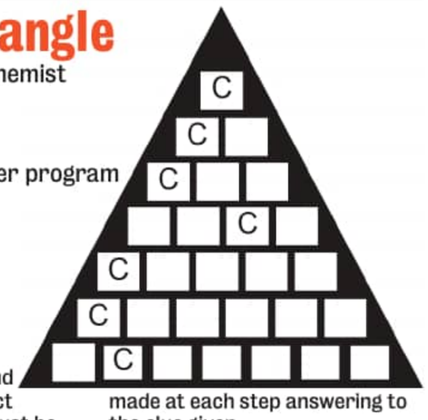
Differences: 1. Bush under window is smaller. 2. Sign is wider. 3. Shutter is moved. 4. Woman's hat is moved. 5. Papers are longer. 6. Fence is different.

Riddler

One day, Bob and Hannah were sitting out on their deck, sipping on some drinks. Bob ran into the house, got an empty two-liter bottle from the freezer and a quarter, and returned to the deck. "I bet you money that this quarter will move with nobody touching it." Hannah thought this was a sure win, however, she lost. When Bob placed the quarter on the mouth of the bottle, the quarter began jumping on one side and making popping sounds. How did Hannah lose?

Alpha triangle

1 Carbon for the chemist
2 Care of, abbr.
3 Large sea fish
4 Medics
5 Writes a computer program
6 Beliefs
7 Despised

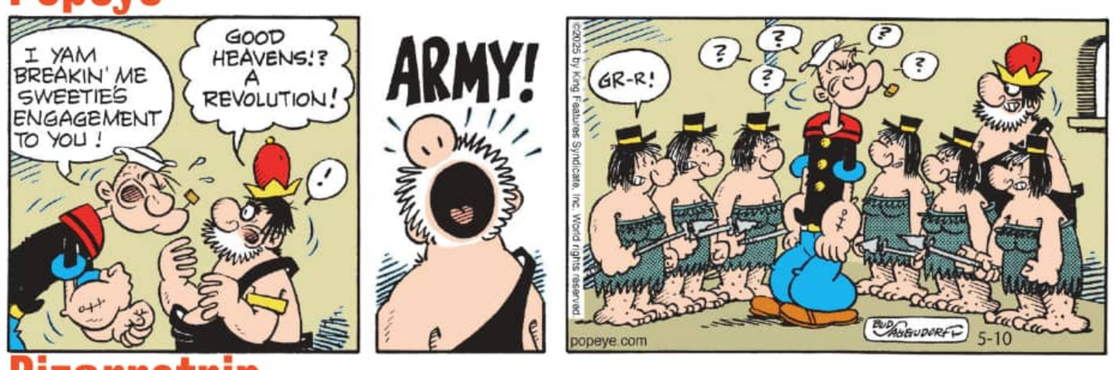


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye



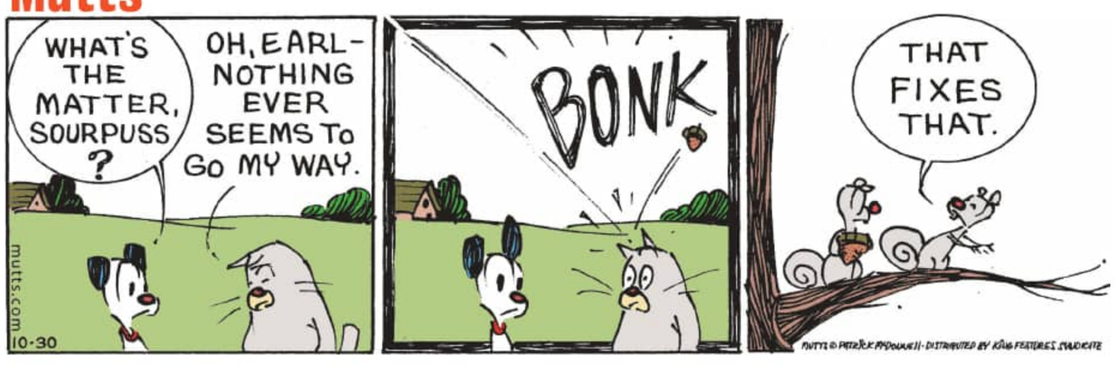
Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

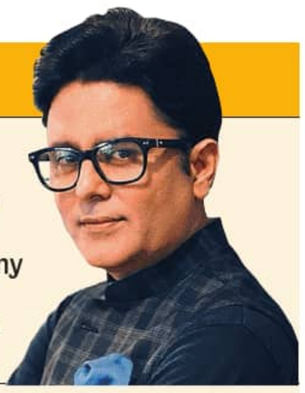
Crankshaft

Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR



If it's your birthday today

Focus on expansion and learning during your next trip around the sun. Career breakthroughs occur when you embrace new technology. Romantic stability provides the confidence to pursue ambitious personal goals. Domestic harmony is achieved through honest dialogue and shared responsibilities. Short trips offer necessary mental breaks. An investment in your education or skills pays off handsomely by December.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Financial gains are coming your way today, possibly through an unexpected source. Use this extra boost to treat yourself to something nice while still maintaining your wise, long-term saving habits.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

You feel a surge of creative energy today, making it perfect for artistic expression. Whether through painting, writing, or music, letting your imagination run wild will bring you immense joy.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Communication is your strongest asset today. Clear and honest dialogue will help you resolve any minor misunderstandings at work or home, leading to much smoother and more pleasant interactions.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Focus on your home environment today by making small improvements. Creating a cosy and organized space will enhance your overall mood and provide a peaceful sanctuary for your daily relaxation.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Your social life is buzzing today with invitations and exciting news. Embrace the opportunity to connect with friends, as these interactions will provide plenty of laughter and wonderful new memories.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Success at work is within your reach today if you stay organized and diligent. Your attention to detail is noticed by your superiors, paving the way for future career advancement.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Today is a great day for personal growth and learning something new. Expanding your knowledge base will open doors you hadn't considered, leading to a much brighter and better future.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Your determination is unmatched today, allowing you to breeze through your to-do list. Staying focused on your priorities ensures that you achieve everything you set out to do with ease.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Optimism is your superpower today. By maintaining a positive outlook, you will attract favourable circumstances and people who will help you turn your many dreams into a beautiful reality.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Practicality helps you navigate today's tasks efficiently. By staying grounded and focusing on what needs to be done, you will find that you can handle any situation with great poise.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

You are feeling very independent and ready to take on the world today. Trust your unique vision and don't be afraid to stand out from the crowd; success is yours.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Romantic energy is in the air today, making it a lovely time for couples and singles alike. Express your heart's desires and enjoy the beautiful connections that follow your honesty.

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SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER As the bottle had previously been in the freezer, the cool air inside expanded when placed in a warmer temperature and escaped through the only out, or the mouth. However, while the quarter was blocking this passage way, the cool air could not leave. Therefore, the expanding cold air moved the quarter enough so a little cool air could come out of the bottle. The popping sounds were from the quarter landing back on the bottle.

FAST FIVE

T	O	R	C	H
A	P	E	R	Y
P	I	P	E	D
A	U	R	A	R
S	M	O	K	O

BULL'S EYE

lope, lout, lute, pelt, plot, pole, poll, POLLUTE, pule, pull, tell, toll

STRIKE OUT

T	I	G	H	T		B	O	M	B	A	R	D	E	
W		I	R	E	P	E	A		D	H	O	L	E	
I		F	I	R	E	A	R	M					N	
S	A	M	I	A	N		L	E	A	D	E	D		
T		O		L	E	E		K			E			
	A	D	A	R		R		R	O	W	D	Y		
E		A		U	R	A	T	E		H		E		
C	O	L	O	N		T		T	E	E	M		C	
A	T	H	E	N	A		M	A	M	M	A	L		
D		S	E	C	R	E	C	Y				O		
O		S	A	T		N	E	T				N		
R	E	L	A	P	S	E		D	H	O	L	E		

QUICK

												S		
								Y		E		S		
										E		I	G	N
												N		

Winning spree
Paul Thomas Anderson wins top honour at 2026 DGA Awards for 'One Battle After Another'

BangaloreMirror | 12
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Starry abode

Ishaan Khatter gets himself a luxury home worth Rs 29.37 crore

Ishaan Khatter may be out of the Oscar race with his film 'Homebound' failing to score a nomination in the Best International film category, but the actor has hit a major personal milestone. He is now a proud owner of a luxury home in the upscale Pali Hill neighbourhood of Bandra.

News reports on Sunday state that the hunk fetched up the luxury pad for an impressive Rs 29.37 crore, according to transaction details revealed in property registration documents accessed by CRE Matrix, a real estate data analytics firm.

The Free Press Journal reports that the apartment, identified as Flat No. 14A in Navroz Apartment at Navroz Premises Co-operative Housing Society Ltd, boasts a built-up area of 2,989.05 square feet, and was sold by Kapil M. Mahtani. As per the report, the deal, which was registered recently, was purchased with a per-square-foot rate that works out to approximately Rs 98,200. This is said to be among the premium pricing of houses typical of the Pali Hill area of Mumbai city. As per registration records, Ishaan paid Rs 1.76 crore towards stamp duty and registration charges.

The purchase marks a notable milestone for the actor, who in 2024, gave fans a look at his three-bedroom apartment along the Bandra sea face. While he has been living the dream, with multiple critically acclaimed films and television series this past years, Ishaan has made no secret about his family's past financial challenges. In an earlier conversation with journalist Barkha Dutt on Mojo Story, Ishaan recalled a time during his childhood when his family hit rock bottom. "I was very young, but that's where it begins. We were lucky because my mom worked, she did a TV show in Delhi for three months and got us out of that place."

He added, "I was raised in a middle-class household. We couldn't afford to study abroad. But we always found a way to move forward. **–ETimes**

Slaying it in black

Deepika Padukone brought the drama to the red carpet at an event in Dubai, when she stepped out in a stunning sculpted black gown. The actress, who is currently keeping a low-public profile, dazzled for the event in a stunning black gown featuring structured shoulders and a plunging neckline. The gown also featured embellishments, adding glitter to the monotone piece. The beauty topped the look off with dewy makeup and her hair styled in a neat low bun. She added sparkle to her look by opting for a dazzling diamond necklace and matching earrings. Taking to her Instagram handle, Deepika posted a number of photos from her BTS shoot. Her industry colleagues and friends, from Orry to Neha Dhupia among others, were quick to react to the pics as they flooded the post with praise, and fireball emoticons.

Deepika has been making rare appearances at various international events in the months leading up to her big screen return in the upcoming films like Shah Rukh Khan's action film, 'King'. She will also be seen in the panIndia project 'AA22xA6', co-starring Allu Arjun and directed by Atlee. **–ETimes**

Suspense splashed in gore

BLOOD ROSES (TELUGU)
3.0 RATING ★★★★★
- **DIRECTOR** MGR
- **ACTORS** Dharma Keerthiraj, Apsara Rani, Sreelu Prudhviraj, Suman, Killi Kranthi, Manchenahalli Manikumar, Gharshana Srinivas, Junior Relangi, and Majji Jadeshwari
- **Duration** 149 minutes
- **Certification** A

The film begins with two politicians - Devi Das and Bajarang Das - in Hyderabad trying all tricks to get their children to get tickets to contest in the Assembly elections. Meanwhile, a series of murders take place and political leaders blame each other. At this juncture, the director introduces Circle Inspector Arun Gogoi (Dharma Keerthiraj) and Sub-Inspector Kumar (Manchenahalli Manikumar), who both have their own personal problems. They commence the probe and it leads to the arrest of Devi Das's son. Devi Das pressurises Home Minister (Suman) to get his son released and suspend Arun Gogoi. Police Commissioner assigns Adhira (Apsara Rani), a circle inspector, to probe the murders. Adhira takes Arun Gogoi into custody and commences the investigation. You have to watch the movie to know what is the connection between Arun Gogoi and Adhira and whether the latter succeeds in nabbing the killer.

Director Mandati Guru Rajan aka MGR has ensured all elements, including romance, action, and horror, to entertain the audiences. Dharma Keerthi, a well-known upcoming actor in Kannada, has done a good job. Apsara Rani looks good and her dialogue delivery and gestures are good. She commands the screen as much as Dharma Keerthiraj in some of the scenes. Sreelu Prudhviraj, who plays a detective, is convincing. Suman, Manchenahalli Mohankumar, Gharshana Srinivas, and Janani have provided good support. Kranthi Killi, as a vicious killer, has acted well.

The movie has too many gory scenes so it can get a bit uncomfortable viewing. It is worth a watch for only for those who crave suspense thrillers.

–Y Maheswara Reddy

Ode to the values of love and sincerity

SUKHIBHAVA (KANNADA)
3.0 RATING ★★★★★
- **DIRECTOR** NK Rajesh Naidu
- **ACTORS** Mahendra Kumar, Sushmitha Nayak, Vihanshi Hegde, Ravishankar Gowda, Shobhraj, Mythri Jaggi, Gowrav Shetty, and Tukali Santosh.
- **Duration** 146 minutes
- **Certification** UA

The movie begins with Surya (Ravishankar Gowda) lighting a cigarette and pondering whether his estranged son Vaibhav (Mahendra Kumar) will meet him. At this juncture, the director introduces a scene where Surya is seen handing over his son Vaibhav to a parish priest for a better future. Vaibhav meets Tara. While most of the girl students hate Vaibhav for being poor in academics, Tara becomes his friend. Mistaking her friendship for love, Vaibhav proposes to her. She asks him to give her one reason why she should reciprocate. She tells him that he is poor not only in academics but also in behaviour. He decides to focus on academics and becomes somebody in society. While searching for Tara, he happens to meet many girls. You have to watch the movie to see whether or not Vaibhav meets Tara.

The movie showcases the bond between father and son and how misunderstanding leads to problems. The director deserves appreciation for handling the megaphone with aplomb. The movie has plenty of actors and the director ensured equal importance to all of them. Swaroop, who plays young Vaibhav, and Manasvi Shetty, who plays young Tara, have acted well. Swaroop's acting, as an adolescent and a misguided son, deserves appreciation. Their gestures and dialogue delivery are very good. Songs are melodious, with the songs Kaalavu Kaledogide Begane and Kattethu Noodadha Hudugi being especially catchy.

Mahendra Kumar looks handsome and energetic. If he focuses on honing his acting skills, he may have a bright future in Sandalwood. Sushmiktha Nayak and Vihanshi Hegde have acted well. Ravishankar Gowda, Shobhraj, Mythri Jaggi, Tukali Santosh, and Ravindranath have given good support. Cinematographer SB Manjunath Nayak has done a good job. The movie conveys a message to wayward boys on the importance of bonding and academics to become self-reliant.

It is worth a watch for family audiences. **–Y Maheswara Reddy**